

Bergson's *Quid Aristoteles de loco Senserit*: An English Translation and Commentary

In 1889, Henri Bergson (1859-1941) submitted both a French and Latin thesis for the completion of his doctoral degree at the University of Paris. Bergson's French thesis, *Essai sur les données immédiates de la conscience (Time and Free Will)*, focused on the problem of free will and introduced his influential concept of duration (Guerlac, 2006). His Latin thesis, *Quid Aristoteles de loco Senserit (Aristotle's Concept of Place)*, analyzed Aristotle's Book Δ of *Physics* and attempted to answer why Aristotle set aside the question of space and confined himself to an analysis of what he meant by body and place (Burnet, 1889). While scholarly editions of Bergson's *Time and Free Will* have been provided in the original French and English translation, there has not been a single edition or commentary written on *Aristotle's Concept of Place* (Bergson, 1959; 1960). With the desire to make *Aristotle's Concept of Place* more accessible to scholars of philosophy and classics, we are working on an English translation and commentary of the text. This paper will cover the method and progress of our translation. Furthermore, it will discuss our interdisciplinary approach to a commentary on Bergson's Latin thesis.

Following in the footsteps of John K. Ryan, we have chosen to approach *Aristotle's Concept of Place* from both a philosophical and classical perspective (Ryan, 1960). This paper will emphasize the relationship between Bergson's Latin thesis and his later philosophical works. More specifically, this paper will consider *Essai sur les données immédiates de la conscience (Time and Free Will)*, *Matière et mémoire (Matter and Memory)*, and *L'Évolution créatrice (Creative Evolution)*. We believe that a careful analysis of *Aristotle's Concept of Place* will help elucidate Bergson's relationship with Aristotle throughout his writings. A thorough commentary of his Latin thesis will explain in what ways Bergson's theory of duration was influenced by

Aristotle's theory of time (Collins-Cavanaugh, 2005). At the end of this paper, we will briefly discuss the further interdisciplinary research that may be done on Bergson's Latin thesis and his writings that focus on the classical world such as his commentary on Lucretius.

Bibliography

Bergson, Henri. *Time and Free Will: An Essay on the Immediate Data of Consciousness*. New York: Harper, 1960.

———. *Œuvres, Edition du Centenaire*. Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1959.

Burnet, J. "Aristotle's Theory of ΤΟΠΙΟΣ Η. Bergson. —Quid Aristoteles De Loco Senserit. Paris, Félix Alcan. 1889. 2 Fr." *The Classical Review* 6, no. 07 (1892).

Collins-Cavanaugh, D. "Bergson's Aristotelian Theory of Duration and the History of Temporality," (Doctoral dissertation, Duquesne University, 2005).

Guerlac, Suzanne. *Thinking in Time: An Introduction to Henri Bergson*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2006.

Ryan, John K. *Ancients and Moderns: Studies in Philosophy and the History of Philosophy, Vol. 5*. Washington: The Catholic University of America Press, 2019.